

Worksession

Agenda Item #	9
Meeting Date	April 23, 2007
Prepared By	Barbara B. Matthews City Manager <i>BBM</i>
Approved By	

Discussion Item	City Manager's Quarterly Update
Background	<p>The City Manager has historically provided the City Council with periodic financial reports during the fiscal year, as well as a review of City programs and activities.</p> <p>As part of the City Manager's quarterly update, the City Manager will provide a status report on the implementation plans for the Council priority areas for the years 2006 and 2007. Agreed upon by the Council in March 2006, these policy areas are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affordable housing • Community Center • Development in various areas of the City • Redevelopment of the New Hampshire Avenue corridor • Tax duplication <p>The status report on the Council priority areas will be distributed at the worksession on April 23, 2007.</p>
Policy	<p>The City Council is the policymaking making body for the City of Takoma Park and establishes work priorities for the staff.</p> <p>The City Manager provides the City Council with updates on the City's financial condition and staff activities to assist the City Council in the performance of its duties.</p>
Fiscal Impact	None
Attachments	<p>General Fund Financial Report for the Third Quarter of FY07</p> <p>Quarterly Report of Activities and Programs</p>
Recommendation	For Discussion Only
Special Consideration	

**CITY OF TAKOMA PARK
GENERAL FUND
FINANCIAL REPORT
FOR THE NINE MONTHS
ENDED MARCH 31, 2007**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The General Fund supports the day-to-day activities of the City, such as police protection, street and park maintenance, and general administrative functions. The General Fund's activities are supported primarily from two sources: taxes and utility fees and intergovernmental revenues.

Certain General Fund revenues are cyclical in nature. For example, property tax receipts and tax duplication payments are received during a certain period of time during the year. Other revenue sources are received on a monthly basis and, as a result, are more evenly distributed throughout the fiscal year.

The largest single source of revenue for the City's general operations is real property taxes. Total collections as of March 31, 2007 totaled \$7,936,747. This is an increase of \$823,030 compared to the same period in the prior year.

The City derives a significant portion of its operating revenues from income taxes. As of March 31, 2007, receipts from this source totaled \$1,118,963. This amount exceeds prior year collections by \$134,034.

Revenues from the investment of City funds were up by \$131,198 compared to the prior year. The increase is partially attributable to higher interest rates and strong cash management practices by the Director of Finance.

Timing differences account for the variance in several revenue sources. These include the taxes paid by railroads and public utilities, the payment received from Montgomery County for the City's operation of the New Hampshire Avenue Recreation Center, police rebate monies, and cable franchise fees.

Like General Fund revenues, not all fund expenditures occur evenly throughout the fiscal year. For example, contributions to the City's two pension plans are made in December. This can result in "peaks" in expenditures at certain times during the fiscal year.

General Fund expenditures as of the close of the third quarter totaled \$11,347,138 compared to \$11,113,102 for the same period in FY06—a difference of \$234,036. The most significant variances were in Capital Outlay, General Government, Police, Public Works, debt service, and non-departmental.

Capital expenditures as of March 31, 2007 totaled \$649,253 compared to \$1,069,903 for the same period in the prior year. The variance is attributable to the significant street work undertaken in FY06.

Combined General Government expenditures for the third quarter were up by \$125,708 compared to the same period in FY06. Most of the variance was attributable to higher personnel costs in the General Management and Finance Divisions in FY07. The Finance Department had a vacant position for the first half of FY06. In the case of General Government, the salary and benefit costs of an employee were charged to the Community Center Fund in FY06. The increase in Police Department expenditures is due to intensive recruitment efforts in the current fiscal year, leading to fewer vacant positions.

The variance in Public Works is primarily due to higher expenditures in the Equipment Maintenance Division in FY07. The major differences occurred in operating supplies, specifically gasoline and diesel costs.

In FY07, the City expanded its take-home car program for police officers to enhance the City's recruitment and retention efforts. The lease payment for the vehicles is reflected in the debt service section of the budget, resulting in higher expenditures for the current fiscal year.

Another significant variance (\$93,696) occurred in non-departmental expenditures. It is primarily due to higher insurance costs in the current fiscal year.

**GENERAL FUND REVENUES
FOR THE NINE MONTHS ENDED
MARCH 31, 2007**

REVENUES BY SOURCE:	Budgeted FY 2007	Actual To Date	Uncollected Revenue	% Collected	Prior Year Actual To Date	Change from Prior Year
Taxes and Utility Fees						
Real Property	8,057,270	7,936,747	120,523	98.50%	7,113,717	823,030
Personal Property	320,000	297,320	22,680	92.91%	264,435	32,885
RR and Public Utilities	170,000	112,830	57,170	66.37%	167,040	(54,210)
Penalties and Interest	32,000	17,846	14,354	55.14%	1,556	16,090
Admission and Amusement	100	143	(43)	143.00%	123	20
Additions and Abatements	0	(8,217)	8,217	n/a	(33,708)	25,491
Highway	648,422	358,230	290,192	55.25%	326,032	32,198
Income Tax	1,672,000	1,118,963	553,037	66.92%	984,929	134,034
Total--Taxes and Utility Fees	10,899,792	9,833,662	1,066,130	90.22%	8,824,124	1,009,538
Licenses and Permits	56,754	67,874	(11,120)	119.59%	43,732	24,142
Fines and Forfeitures	175,000	139,366	35,634	79.64%	146,248	(6,882)
Use of Money and Property	110,000	266,784	(156,784)	242.53%	135,586	131,198
Charges for Services						
Inspection Fees	278,600	207,635	70,965	74.53%	190,545	17,090
Public Parking Facilities	45,000	15,595	29,405	34.66%	24,502	(8,907)
Waste Collection & Disposal Charges	73,000	55,955	17,045	76.65%	36,993	18,962
Recreation Programs and Services	252,000	197,463	54,537	78.36%	170,501	26,962
Library Fines and Fees	12,000	10,791	1,209	89.93%	9,683	1,108
Passport Services	30,000	23,052	6,948	76.84%	17,994	5,058
Copying	1,000	1,115	(115)	111.50%	282	833
Advertising--Bus Shelters	6,000	12,092	(6,092)	201.53%	4,948	7,144
Farmer's Market	3,000	4,680	(1,680)	156.00%	3,120	1,560
Telephone Commissions	300	0	300	0.00%	173	(173)
Recyclable Sales	7,000	9,914	(2,914)	141.63%	7,453	2,461
Mulch Sales	12,000	4,710	7,290	39.25%	6,971	(2,261)
Special Trash Pickup	8,000	6,200	1,800	77.50%	6,471	(271)
Total--Charges for Services	727,900	549,202	178,698	75.45%	479,636	69,566
Intergovernmental Revenues						
Police Protection (State)	411,674	309,470	102,204	75.17%	357,678	(48,208)
Bank Share Tax	5,643	0	5,643	0.00%	0	0
Library Aid	103,620	51,810	51,810	50.00%	103,573	(51,763)
Police Rebate	564,669	282,335	282,334	50.00%	564,669	(282,334)
In Lieu of Police	2,322,023	2,322,023	0	100.00%	2,322,023	0
In Lieu of Roads Maintenance	442,624	442,624	0	100.00%	430,079	12,545
In Lieu of Parks Maintenance	77,229	72,229	5,000	93.53%	71,670	559
In Lieu of Crossing Guard	163,193	163,193	0	100.00%	130,435	32,758
Takoma/Langley Rec. Agreement	100,000	50,000	50,000	50.00%	25,000	25,000
Hotel Motel Tax	75,000	50,686	24,314	67.58%	47,166	3,520
Cable Franchise Fees	150,971	85,803	65,168	56.83%	117,013	(31,210)
Cable--Operating	62,000	31,226	30,774	50.36%	30,014	1,212
Total--Intergovernmental Revenues	4,478,646	3,861,399	617,247	86.22%	4,199,320	(337,921)
Miscellaneous						
Tree Fund	0	0	0	n/a	15,000	(15,000)
Other	25,000	14,251	10,749	57.00%	18,392	(4,141)
Insurance Claims	2,000	12,033	(10,033)	601.65%	1,273	10,760
Takoma Langley Crossroads	0	0	0	n/a	3,334	(3,334)
Day Laborer Site	30,000	39,000	(9,000)	130.00%	39,000	0
Takoma Foundation Grant	0	0	0	n/a	91,947	(91,947)
Administrative Fees--Parking	3,000	9,465	(6,465)	315.50%	2,416	7,049
Donations	1,000	420	580	42.00%	135	285
Total--Miscellaneous	61,000	75,169	(14,169)	123.23%	171,497	(96,328)
Total Operating Revenues	16,509,092	14,793,456	1,715,636	89.61%	14,000,143	793,313
Sale of City Property	0	12,183	(12,183)	n/a	12,451	(268)
Total Revenues	16,509,092	14,805,639	1,703,453	89.68%	14,012,594	793,045

**GENERAL FUND EXPENDITURES
FOR THE NINE MONTHS ENDED
MARCH 31, 2007**

DEPARTMENT:	Budgeted FY 2007	Expenditures To Date	Available Balance	% Unexpended	Prior Year Actual To Date	Change from Prior Year
<u>General Government</u>						
Legislative	72,475	54,141	18,334	25.30%	54,969	(828)
General Management	852,789	594,030	258,759	30.34%	500,300	93,730
Finance	381,529	288,818	92,711	24.30%	294,041	(5,223)
Legal	172,150	88,278	83,872	48.72%	86,818	1,460
Information Systems	252,858	196,128	56,730	22.44%	195,319	809
Human Resources	136,081	72,842	63,239	46.47%	67,314	5,528
City Clerk	177,490	119,105	58,385	32.89%	88,873	30,232
Total--General Government	2,045,372	1,413,342	632,030	30.90%	1,287,634	125,708
<u>Public Safety</u>						
Office of the Chief	474,837	293,228	181,609	38.25%	263,601	29,627
Communications	386,390	204,964	181,426	46.95%	178,183	26,781
Operations	2,755,910	2,302,046	453,864	16.47%	2,183,625	118,421
Support Services	688,586	390,080	298,506	43.35%	419,251	(29,171)
Administrative Services	700,931	438,610	262,321	37.42%	406,217	32,393
Total--Public Safety	5,006,654	3,628,928	1,377,726	27.52%	3,450,877	178,051
<u>Public Works</u>						
Administration	264,905	203,934	60,971	23.02%	173,949	29,985
Building Maintenance	689,671	453,396	236,275	34.26%	449,277	4,119
Equipment Maintenance	483,660	384,927	98,733	20.41%	316,575	68,352
Right-of-Way	805,633	578,475	227,158	28.20%	554,506	23,969
Solid Waste Management	728,754	494,815	233,939	32.10%	528,806	(33,991)
Gardens	160,914	84,557	76,357	47.45%	106,568	(22,011)
Urban Forest	221,716	138,448	83,268	37.56%	156,088	(17,640)
City Engineer	152,506	80,602	71,904	47.15%	70,799	9,803
Total--Public Works	3,507,759	2,419,154	1,088,605	31.03%	2,356,568	62,586
<u>Recreation</u>						
Administration	504,408	272,483	231,925	45.98%	237,929	34,554
Outreach	0	0	0	n/a	115,677	(115,677)
TP Recreation Center	178,023	114,693	63,330	35.57%	114,901	(208)
Community Programs	85,116	56,206	28,910	33.97%	55,965	241
Athletic Fields/Facilities	58,000	13,630	44,370	76.50%	29,815	(16,185)
Camps	81,587	47,259	34,328	42.08%	30,704	16,555
Before/After School Programs	64,560	25,374	39,186	60.70%	28,204	(2,830)
Community Center	204,613	103,733	100,880	49.30%	33,404	70,329
Total--Recreation	1,176,307	633,378	542,929	46.16%	646,599	(13,221)
<u>Housing & Comm. Dev.</u>						
Administration	120,938	73,122	47,816	39.54%	72,742	380
Code Enforcement	365,208	232,313	132,895	36.39%	208,095	24,218
Landlord-Tenant	118,607	91,182	27,425	23.12%	81,209	9,973
COLTA	114,227	67,163	47,064	41.20%	62,672	4,491
Community Development	497,080	221,485	275,595	55.44%	199,612	21,873
Affordable Housing	133,440	68,448	64,992	48.71%	68,723	(275)
Total--Housing & Comm. Dev.	1,349,500	753,713	595,787	44.15%	693,053	60,660
Communications	360,484	241,561	118,923	32.99%	243,935	(2,374)
<u>Library</u>						
Library	799,753	533,750	266,003	33.26%	531,968	1,782
Computer Learning Center	80,301	49,250	31,051	38.67%	14,088	35,162
Total--Library	880,054	583,000	297,054	33.75%	546,056	36,944
Debt Service	871,313	677,695	193,618	22.22%	565,059	112,636
Non-Departmental	1,263,977	347,114	916,863	72.54%	253,418	93,696
Capital Outlay	1,265,674	649,253	616,421	48.70%	1,069,903	(420,650)
Total	17,727,094	11,347,138	6,379,956	35.99%	11,113,102	234,036

**CITY MANAGER'S
QUARTERLY UPDATE
JANUARY 1, 2007 – MARCH 31, 2007**

Community Outreach by City Manager

- On January 3rd, met with residents along the Maple/Sherman Avenue corridor to discuss their concerns about a number of quality of life issues, including loitering, graffiti, noise, and suspected drug activity.
- Participated in a meeting to discuss long-term strategies and concerns relating to crime issues in and around Old Takoma. Others in attendance at the January 29th meeting were Mayor Porter, Captain Ed Coursey, and OTBA Executive Director Roz Grigsby.
- Met with Erwin Mack, Executive Director of Takoma Langley Crossroads, and Chief Ricucci to discuss issues of concern to the business community and how the Takoma Park Police Department could be of assistance on March 5th.
- Joined the residents of the Franklin Apartments for lunch on March 15th. Councilmember Seamens and Chief Ricucci were also in attendance.
- On March 22nd, participated in a City-sponsored meeting with the Hampshire Gardens Citizens' Association and the Hillwood Manor Neighborhood Association. Staff and Ward 6 Councilmember Doug Barry provided updates on policing practices, code enforcement efforts, and planned activities along New Hampshire Avenue.

Administration

- A major focus of departmental staff was the development of the City Manager's proposed budget for FY08. Considerable staff resources were devoted to this effort.
- Staff worked with ANCL Architects to complete additional work related to the gym feasibility study. An informational brochure on the proposed construction of a gymnasium was drafted, translated, and mailed to all City households. Two community workshops on the various gym options were held in February; findings from the workshops were presented to the City Council on February 12th.
- Community and Government Liaison Suzanne Ludlow monitored State legislation of importance to the City of Takoma Park and testified or arranged Council testimony on several bills, including the Community Center bond bill request. She stayed in close communication with new and returning District 20 representatives throughout the legislative session and kept the City Council up-to-date on legislative matters.
- The City's negotiating team, led by Deputy City Manager Wayne Hobbs, reached an agreement with AFSCME on a new union contract.
- The Information Technology Division issued a Request for Proposals for a new voice mail system, gasoline dispensing equipment, and computer servers. The results of the bid process were presented to the City Council during the quarter and the purchases were authorized. Installation of the new voice mail system and purchase of the servers took place during the quarter. The gasoline dispensing equipment project should be completed by mid- May.

- The selection process for the position of Chief of Police was concluded during the quarter. Chief Ronald A. Ricucci joined the staff on February 20th. He was chosen following a nationwide search. More than 90 candidates applied for the position.
- The Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada awarded the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting to the City for its Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2006. The Certificate of Achievement is the highest form of recognition in the area of governmental accounting and financial reporting. The City's CAFR was judged by an impartial panel to meet the high standards of the program, including demonstrating a constructive "spirit of full disclosure" to clearly communicate the government's financial story and motivate interested parties to read the CAFR.
- The City Clerk's Office conducted a special election on January 30th. Reuben Snipper was elected as the Councilmember for Ward 5, replacing Marc Elrich who resigned the office in late November following his election to the Montgomery County Council. The special election was the first election held since the City Charter was amended to incorporate instant runoff voting in City elections.
- The following employees were recognized for their many years of service to the City of Takoma Park at the Winter Employee Appreciation Day held in February:
 - 5-year Award Recipients: Kimley Mannix, Public Works; Debra Haiduven, Recreation; Douglas Malarkey, Police; Eric Mueller, Police; Cynthia Conrad, Police; Michelle Holmes, Police; Sofia Visurraga, Administration; Henry Sorto, Information Technology; Jarvalin Cooper, Police; and Wreh Jalla, Recreation
 - 10-year Award Recipients: Troy Fingal, Public Works; Richard Poole, Police; Alex McDonnell, Recreation; Jerome Erwin, Police; Lonni Moffet, Communications; Karen Hampton, Human Resources; Lucy Scott, Library; and Michael Collins, Police
 - 15-year Award Recipients: Linda Fisher, Police; Mark Hammond, Police; Keith Largent, Police; and Ed Harrison, Public Works
 - 35-year Award Recipient: Doris Rodgers, Police

Communications

- January Snapshots episodes included a tour of the new police department, *Stop for Santa in the Crosswalk* (a segment on pedestrian safety in the Takoma-Langley Crossroads), and *Your Vote Counts: An Introduction to Instant Runoff Voting*. During the month of February, coverage included segments on poetry readings, the Takoma Artists Open Studio, and Children's Art in the Community Center, as well as *A Look Back at the Takoma Park Police Department*. March Snapshots segments included highlights of the Jazz Band Brawl, *Community Policing - A Look Back (First Female Officer)*, *Meet New Ward 5 Councilmember Reuben Snipper*, *The GYM: What Do You Think, Takoma Park*, and *Going Green At Home*.
- Strong utilization of Granicus, the web based video on demand service offered by the City, continued. The most viewed programs during the quarter were various City Council meetings and *Your Vote Counts: An Introduction to Instant Runoff Voting*
- Events covered by City TV during the quarter including the following: the annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. birthday event, the poetry series featuring Rhonda Williford and Maria Mazzenga sponsored by the Arts and Humanities Commission, the Jazz Band Brawl, and some of the seminars from the Green Building Conference.

- City TV, in conjunction with the City Clerk's Office, created an informational video about Instant Runoff Voting in preparation for the January 30th special election. The video will also be used to educate the public about Instant Runoff Voting for upcoming general elections. It was featured in Snapshots, archived on the City's website, and provided to the Takoma Park Maryland Library for patron check out. Copies will be available upon request.
- New programming unveiled during the quarter included performances at the 2006 Street Festival by Robert Lighthouse Blues Band, Junkyard Saints, The Natty Beaux, The Turner Brothers, Shosho, and The Sherwood Blues Band. Musical performances by Janie Meneely, Alan Jabbour, Cheick Diabate, and Future Shock at past Folk Festivals were also released.
- A new designer and a new printer were hired to produce the City Newsletter. Both are doing a great job.
- The main page of the City's website was reorganized into News, Events, Projects, E-Links, and Quick Police News to help visitors find items more easily. The website was used extensively to provide information regarding the Special Election held in January. It also served as a resource for information regarding the proposed construction of a gymnasium.
- Communications Director Lonni Moffet attended the NATOA Regional Legal and Policy Seminar in March. The FCC has issued an Order that will impact the relationship between local jurisdictions (franchising authorities) and cable operators. While primarily addressing the issue of "barriers to entry" to new entrants, the FCC has also issued a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking to address the issue of incumbents. At this time, it is not clear what the impact will be on the City in the short or long term, or the impact on franchises the City has with the three competitors. A number of local government associations have banded together to challenge the FCC's authority to enact this kind of policy. More information may be obtained about this at: <http://www.thetruthontelecomreform.org>
- The Communications Office, working with the Office of the City Manager and the Recreation Department, drafted and issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) for architectural services to identify options for renovation of the Council Chamber/Auditorium for use as both a meeting space and as a performing arts venue. Proposals are due on April 23rd. Interested parties may download the RFP from the City's website at www.takomaparkmd.gov/auditorium.

Housing and Community Development

- The City's first green building conference was held on February 18th. Approximately 250 people attended the day-long event that was organized by the department's planning staff.
- The City was awarded grant funds in the amount of \$149,100 under the Safe Routes to School program. The funds will be used for infrastructure improvements and a variety of programming efforts to increase the safety of children walking to and from school.
- The planning staff organized four community workshops to review the Master Plan's vision for the following areas: Erie Avenue and Flower Avenue, Flower Avenue and Piney Branch, Sligo Creek Parkway and New Hampshire Avenue, and Eastern Avenue and New Hampshire Avenue. The workshops are designed to provide residents and business owners with an opportunity to review the vision of the 2000 Takoma Park Master Plan and to identify potential small scale improvements for specific commercial areas.
- Request for Proposals were issued for the Ethan Allen Gateway urban design charrette and neighborhood traffic studies.

- Four grant applications were prepared and submitted by the planning staff. Two applications were under the United States Environmental Protection Agency Smart Growth program, and two were for funding through the Transportation Land Use Connection Program.
- The Metropolitan Washington Area Council of Governments awarded the City of Takoma Park consultant services to develop a City specific presentation/workshop that assists neighborhoods in recognizing, measuring, and evaluating new development following smart growth principles. This presentation will be aimed at areas with high potential for redevelopment, including Takoma/Langley Park, Ethan Allen Gateway, and Maryland Gateway. The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, Montgomery County, and Prince George's County also received consulting services to conduct a pedestrian safety study of the Takoma/Langley Crossroads area in preparation for the Takoma/Langley Crossroads sector plan process.
- The planning staff organized three meetings for business owners along the New Hampshire Avenue corridor. Meeting topics included the SHA road work underway in the Crossroads
- Discussions continued with the Montgomery County Department of Economic Development regarding the redevelopment of the New Hampshire Avenue corridor. In February, departmental staff met with Dr. Devance Walker, Manager of Small Business Services, to discuss specific projects and programming which could be provided to area businesses.
- Director of Housing and Community Development Sara Daines assisted the Arts and Humanities Commission with the coordination of six exhibits, three poetry readings, and one public art project.
- Assistance was provided to the tenants at 7716-7738 Maple Avenue through the Capacity Building program. Tenants had the opportunity to attend a seminar on credit and to receive individual credit counseling in order to evaluate their personal financial situations and the feasibility of purchasing the property.
- The affordable housing staff surveyed tenant associations to assess their needs and interest in attending a joint meeting to discuss their shared concerns.
- The department notified local real estate agents and brokers, title companies, and the Montgomery County Bar Association of the new mandatory notice requirements for contracts of sale of any rental facility located within Takoma Park.
- Rental housing licensing activity included the issuance of 49 biennial licenses, the discontinuation of licenses for five single-family houses, and the processing of licenses for 17 new rental units.
- The code enforcement staff reported 102 rental properties to the Maryland Department on the Environment for failure to comply with State Lead Risk Reduction requirements.
- Eight rental properties representing 493 rental units were issued Notices of Violation for failure to obtain a rental housing license under the revised licensing ordinance.
- Twenty-nine (29) new nuisance complaint cases were opened. Seven were closed. Seventy-three cases (73) opened prior to January 2007 were closed. Fifty (50) notices of violation were issued, as well as three municipal citation infractions. Four nuisance complaint cases were forwarded to the City Attorney's Office for prosecution, with three cases brought before the District Court.
- Application forms for 2007 rental licenses were revised and billings distributed in partnership with the Finance Department staff. Approximately 50 percent of the applications had been returned as of the end of the quarter and are under review in accordance with the revised ordinance requirements.

- A new targeted code enforcement inspection program was established, with implementation scheduled to take place in April.

Library

- In January, the Library introduced a new on-line book club, which was made available through the generosity of the Friends of the Library. "Dear Reader" enables users to sample a variety of books in different genres and read a daily installment for a week, after which they may check the book out at the Takoma Park Library or elsewhere. It's a great way to become acquainted with the works of many authors.
- In January, Children's Librarian Karen MacPherson began a Teen Book Club. On the third Thursday of the month, teens meet in the children's room to share snacks and engage in lively discussion about their favorite books.
- Lucia Acin Andion re-joined the staff as a Library Assistant in February, following a year spent in her native Spain. She manages the Library's magazine subscription inventory and is an invaluable resource in assisting Spanish-speaking families.
- A new series of holiday craft programs began on February 12th. The first event was a Valentine-making program, which attracted 50 children and parents - all covered with glitter by the end of the evening! March featured a "Spring Fling" crafts program. The Friends of the Library are funding the purchase of craft materials.
- During the quarter, the Library observed Black History Month, with displays of children's books by and about African-American authors. Particular focus was given to winners of the Coretta Scott King Award, now in its 37th year. Children's Librarian Karen MacPherson provided introductions to poetry (focusing on the work of African-American poets) to seven third grade elementary school classes.
- March saw an increase in the Library's young adult fiction collection, housed in a special new bookcase. The enhancement was funded by the Friends of the Library and was made possible by a donation from author Katherine Patterson given in memory of Gene Namovicz.
- On March 26th, the Friends of the Library held its annual meeting at which the organization's officers were elected. The annual report of the Friends of the Library noted that nearly \$8,000 in gifts was given to the Library during the past year.

Police

- Ronald A. Ricucci was sworn in by Mayor Kathy Porter on February 20th as the City's new Chief of Police
- Intensive efforts to fill all position vacancies with qualified individuals continued. As of the end of the quarter, the department's sworn officer staffing was 39, with two positions yet to be filled. Two dispatchers were hired. Recruitment processes were underway for the position of Communications Supervisor, Executive Assistant, Accreditation Coordinator, and Evidence Clerk.
- In response to the series of armed robberies that occurred in late December and the early part of the quarter, the department initiated a special detail in the Old Takoma area. The detail consisted of uniformed officers and plainclothes detectives; the officers patrolled in cars and on foot and made contact with business owners on a daily basis.

- Crime statistics for the first quarter of 2007 were compiled and reflected a ten percent decline in reported Part One offenses from the prior year. There were 194 offenses as compared to 204 in 2006.
- Traffic enforcement continued to be a high priority for the department. Officers conducted 1,425 traffic stops in the first quarter with 1,206 resulting in the issuance of a citation. This was slightly more than double the amount from the same period in 2006. Considerable focus and attention were given to New Hampshire Avenue, Philadelphia Avenue, Maple Avenue, Flower Avenue, Carroll Avenue, Piney Branch Road, and Ethan Allen Avenue.
- During his first five weeks on the job, Chief Ricucci spent considerable time reaching out to City residents and the business community. He met with residents of Ward 6 and the Franklin Apartments, as well as the Ritchie Citizens' Association. Chief Ricucci also attended meetings of the Old Takoma Business Association and the Public Safety Citizens Advisory Committee. He participated in a gathering of Takoma DC residents as well.
- Chief Ricucci reached out to the media in an effort to better communicate with City residents and business owners on his philosophy of policing. He was interviewed by the Gazette, the Takoma Voice, and the City Newsletter, and was featured in a Snapshots segment.
- During the selection process for the Police Chief position, the City Manager emphasized the importance of cross-jurisdictional collaboration and cooperation. Chief Ricucci made this a top priority when he assumed leadership of the Police Department. During his first five weeks on the job, he met with the following: Montgomery County Police Chief Thomas Manger, Rockville Police Chief Terance Treschuk, Chevy Chase Village Chief Roy Gordon, Montgomery County Third District Commander Betsy Davis, Prince George's County Hyattsville District Commander Kevin Davis, Metropolitan Police Department Fourth District Commander Hilton Burton, and Metro Police Chief Polly Hansen.
- The quarter was a busy one for the CSAFE staff. Activities included the following:
 - On February 5th, staff met with a variety of partners to work on the development of a gang awareness training curriculum for parents and community members.
 - On March 8th, the CSAFE team coordinated an Opportunities Fair to highlight social services and employment opportunities for the offender and ex-offender community. At least 30 service providers and employers and 60 participants were in attendance.
 - The CSAFE team coordinated a parent's group in Northwest Park and Hampshire West. The purpose of this group is to provide parents with the opportunity to voice their concerns, network amongst themselves (forming a support group of sorts), and receive education and training about a variety of topics. This group met three times in the third quarter.
 - CSAFE staff engaged in outreach through ESOL classes offered by CASA de Maryland. The goal of this partnership is to educate class participants about how to avoid being a victim of a street robbery and to encourage them to report crime. During mini-talks in the English classes, students are encouraged to call 911 in case of emergency and to open bank accounts rather than carry large amounts of cash in their pockets. To date, CSAFE has reached out to approximately 200 students.
 - On March 8th, the CSAFE team coordinated an Opportunities Fair to highlight social services and employment opportunities for the offender and ex-offender community. At least 30 service providers and employers and 60 participants were in attendance.

- Over the past quarter, staff met with a variety of partners to work on the development of a gang awareness training curriculum for parents and community members. The core-planning group met 12 times during the quarter to develop the content of this training. Meetings are continuing into the fourth quarter.
- On March 2nd, Chief Ricucci and other departmental staff members participated in Read Across America at Piney Branch Elementary School. They read storybooks to third, fourth, and fifth grade students.

Public Works

- Tiffany Stewart, who previously worked as a receptionist at the Community Center, transferred to the Public Works Department as its new Office Assistant.
- The Building Maintenance Division implemented a new work schedule for cleaning of City facilities. The new schedule provides for coverage in the evenings and on weekends.
- The Equipment Maintenance Division researched available alternatively fueled vehicles and recommended purchase of a Toyota Prius to the City Council. Delivery of the vehicle is anticipated in April.
- Based on staff's recommendations, the City Council awarded contracts for replacement of fuel pumps and the purchase of fuel management software. The overflow containment basin was upgraded as part of the project.
- Anthony McDonald joined the staff of the Gardens Division on March 12th.
- The City Arborist presented his annual report to the City Council on March 26th.
- The Urban Forest Division coordinated the planting of 16 maple trees on Maple Avenue between Philadelphia Avenue and Sherman Avenue through a contract with Stadler Gardens. Twenty (20) trees were planted by City staff in Jeque Park and the Prince George's triangle.
- The City Engineer oversaw the installation of a traffic calming project on Elm Avenue at Lincoln Avenue and at Auburn Avenue. The project included installation of a sidewalk from Ethan Allen Avenue to Auburn Avenue and a traffic circle at Elm and Lincoln, as well as an extension of the curbs to narrow the intersection at Elm and Auburn Avenues.
- The City Engineer oversaw the installation of a new sidewalk on Boston Avenue from Margaret Avenue to Philadelphia Avenue and replacement of existing deteriorating sidewalk from Alfred Drive to Takoma Avenue. Four speed humps on Boston Avenue were also replaced due to their deteriorated condition.
- Other infrastructure work included replacement of deteriorated curb, gutter, sidewalk and driveway apron in the 6000 block of Poplar Avenue and on Houston Avenue and Sligo Creek Parkway. Sidewalk and apron replacement also took place at 6 Grant Avenue.
- The City Engineer presented an update on the City's Street Restoration Program to the City Council on March 26th.
- Stormwater management work performed during the quarter included a variety of tasks in the 800 block of Elm Avenue. The existing inlet and 50 feet of existing drain pipe were enlarged. Three hundred (300) feet of new drainline was installed as part of the project.

- Departmental staff worked with a landscape architect and area neighborhood organizations to develop a drainage plan for Spring Park.
- A contract was awarded for the Cleveland Avenue rain garden project.

Recreation

- With the hiring of Teen Manager Karla Kelley and Assistant Director Gregory Clark, the Recreation Department became fully staffed. Both Ms. Kelley and Mr. Clark brought many years of recreational experience to the City.
- The winter sports leagues enjoyed strong participation, as evidenced by the following program registration statistics:
 - The Friday Night Y.E.S. League had six teams. A total of 52 kids, grades 7-9, participated in the program held in the Piney Branch Elementary School gym.
 - Fifteen (15) third and fourth grade children participated in an eight-week basketball clinic at the Piney Branch Elementary School gym.
 - Four teams comprised of 33 kids participated in the Takoma Park Basketball League program, held at the Piney Branch Elementary School gym.
 - A total of 63 youth, grades 1-4, played indoor soccer every Sunday at the New Hampshire Avenue Recreation Center.
- A new series of programs with a focus on family events was introduced during the quarter. The Recreation Department plans the events and makes all arrangements, including transportation. Events held during the quarter included a trip to a rock climbing gym in Rockville, snow tubing at Ski Liberty's Boulder Ridge, and family movie nights in the Community Center Auditorium.
- Departmental staff took 13 high school teenagers to visit Lincoln University and Cheyney University in Pennsylvania. The tour guides for each school shared valuable information on program offerings, available scholarships, and eligibility criteria for scholarships. The teens were delighted to learn more about campus life, including academic and athletic offerings, fraternity and sorority life, and stepping. More trips are planned in the near future.